Step One: Pre-Reading Reflection

1. **Think About Your Purpose**: Why are you reading this text? (e.g., for class, research, personal interest) What do you already know about the topic?
2. **Connect to Your Culture and Experiences**: How might this topic relate to your cultural background, community, or personal experiences? Write down 2-3 ideas or questions you have about the topic based on your own knowledge.

Step Two: Skim the Text

1. **Preview the Text**: Read the title, abstract, headings, and any bolded or italicized terms. Look at images, charts, or graphs.
2. **Predict the Content:** Based on your preview, what do you think the text is about? Write down your predictions.

Step Three: Active Reading

1. **Annotate as You Read**: Underline or highlight key ideas, unfamiliar terms, and passages that stand out to you. Look up unfamiliar words. Write questions or comments in the margins.
2. **Use the "3C" Strategy**:
   a. Connect: How does this text connect to your life, culture, or community? How does it connect to other texts or concepts in the class?
   b. Challenge: What ideas in the text challenge your assumptions or beliefs?
   c. Change: How does this text change or expand your understanding of the topic?
3. **Pause and Reflect**: After each section, write a 1-2 sentence summary in your own words. Note any personal connections or questions that arise.

Step Four: Post-Reading Reflection and Discussion

1. **Summarize the Text**: Write a 3-5 sentence summary of the text's main argument or purpose.
2. **Reflect on Your Learning**: What did you learn from this text that you didn't know before? How does this text relate to your cultural background or experiences? What questions do you still have?
3. **Apply the Knowledge**: How can you use what you learned from this text in your own life, studies, or community? Write down 1-2 ways you might apply this knowledge.
4. **Share with a Peer or in Small Group Discussion**: What similarities or differences did you notice in your interpretations of the text? How does the text connect to your experiences?

Evidence-Based Retention Strategies

- **Spaced Practice**: Revisit your annotations and summaries over multiple study sessions (e.g., 1 day, 1 week).
- **Elaboration**: Ask yourself: "How does this concept relate to my community's values or history?" Example: If reading about systemic inequality, connect it to your family's or community's experiences.
- **Retrieval Practice**: Close your notes and write down 3 key ideas from the text.

Encoding to Help Retention

Encoding is turning what you learn into something your brain can hold onto — like saving a file so you can open it later. Why Use It?

- **Remember Better**: Actively engaging with information (instead of just skimming) helps it stick.
- **Connect the Dots**: Link new ideas to what you already know or care about.
- **Study Smarter**: Spend less time re-reading and more time understanding.
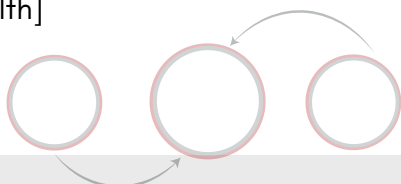
Concept Maps for Encoding

Why It Works: Visualizes connections for better memory.

How to Do It:
1. Write Main Ideas in Boxes/Circles.
2. Connect Ideas with Arrows (label relationships).
3. Add Examples or Details.

Example

[Cognitive Dissonance] → [Caused by] → [Conflicting Beliefs] → [Example: Junk food vs. health]

Outlines for Encoding

Why It Works: Forces you to organize ideas hierarchically.

How to Do It:
1. Create a skeleton: use headings/subheadings from the text.
2. Fill in your own words: add brief notes under each heading

Example

II. Cognitive Dissonance
1. Definition: Mental discomfort from conflicting beliefs.
2. Example: Wanting to eat junk food vs. wanting to be healthy.